

Animal research and cardiovascular surgery

Pesquisa com animais e a cirurgia cardiovascular

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The invasion of the Royal Institute in São Roque, SP, on the 18th of October, in which tens of Beagle dogs were evacuated by activists, created a huge controversy, amplified by the wide dissemination in the media and on the internet. Moreover, the action of activists led to the closure of the lab. Not only that. Many institutions that use animals as experimental models have suffered threats and pressures, being forced to halt their work. In many institutions, educational activities and training of residents who use animals are being progressively replaced by simulations and experiments with pig hearts obtained from slaughterhouses.

It is a situation that merits consideration by all. As “scientists” surgeons we are, we are required to examine this issue from a objective point of view, without the emotional tone of people driven by passion and irrationality.

This “activism” is not restricted to Brazil. In Italy, under pressure from activists, a law barring animal research adopted by parliament and awaiting presidential approval has been criticized by scientists. A petition calling for the revision of the law had succeeded, until the beginning of December, 13,000 accessions.

According to this law, from 2017, it is prohibited the use of animals for research, experiments relating to drug abuse and xenotransplantation. It also prohibits the breeding of dogs, cats and non-human primates for scientific purposes, although the Ministry of Health may authorize its use for basic research aimed at the treatment of serious human and animals diseases. Finally, it ends with the use of animals in university courses in sciences, medicine included, with the exception of veterinary. The use of animals in scientific research dates back centuries. Cardiovascular surgery, specifically, owes much to the animal research to get to the current stage, saving millions of lives around the planet. Pioneers like Clarence Dennis, John Gibbon, Walton Lillehei, among dozens of others in the mid-twentieth century, used dogs to develop CPB [1].

The Brazilian Journal of Cardiovascular Surgery (BJCVS) has regularly published articles reporting animal research. In this edition, the article “Reversible pulmonary trunk banding. IX. G6PD activity of adult goat myocardium submitted to ventricular retraining” by Renato Assad and colleagues (p. 482), is an example to use goats to measure

myocardial activity of glucose 6-phosphate dehydrogenase.

The BJCVS maintains its commitment to ethics when explaining in its Rules for Authors that: “*In experimental studies involving animals, it must be in compliance with the standards set out in Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources, National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC, United States), 1996, and Ethical Principles in Animal Experimentation (Brazilian College of Animal Experimentation - COBEA, available at: www.cobea.org.br), 1991*”.

There is also the requirement of submission of a copy of the opinion of the Research Ethics Committee when submitting the manuscript and empowering research. It is a way of ensuring that standards are being met .

Remember that morality, ethics and laws are representing the desire of the majority and must be respected.

Citations

I’ve received with much satisfaction, an email from Dr. Antonio Alceu dos Santos, stating that the “*Heart retransplantation in children without the use of blood product*” published in Volume 27.2 of BJCVS, of which he is the first author, was one of the “top 20” in the field of pediatric cardiac surgery, according to the site search BioMedLib (www.biomedlib.com). This shows that the internationalization of our journal is a reality.

I have emphasized that through our site (www.bjcv.org and www.scielo.br/rbccv) are accessed in over 100 countries, about 7000 readers daily. Therefore, I insist on the necessity of the study have high scientific standard and preferably written in English, so that the hits on our sites can turn into citations, the only way to increase our Impact Factor.

In this issue, we publish a study - *epair of aortic root in patients with aneurysm or dissection: comparing the outcomes of valvesparing root replacement with those from the Bentall procedure* (p. 435), from United States. It is a proof that we are reaching our goals and gives us more confidence to move forward with the unconditional support we have received from colleagues.

APP

We have expanded the platforms on which BJCVS can be

accessed. Our application for smartphones and tablets is now available in the Google Store. The application for the devices that use the iOS system is being finalized and soon it will also may be downloaded.

XML

I remind the readers that from 2014, we will have to adapt to the new quality standards by SciELO, which will require that publications adopt the XML standard, the same used by Thomson Reuters and the PubMed Central database for which we are seeking our entrance. Therefore, I ask that everyone follow the pattern established by norms of BJCVS, especially with regard to images. Our team is available to answer any questions.

BSCVS

I must compliment the current Board of the Brazilian Society of Cardiovascular Surgery (BSCVS), led by president Prof. Dr. Walter Gomes, terminating his mandate. Many were the achievements for our specialty, in addition to the unconditional support to BJCVS. On page III, Dr. Walter sums up his management. Also, I take this opportunity to welcome the new board, captained by Dr. Marcelo Matos Cascudo, which certainly will pursue such work.

CME

Items available for testing by the Continuing Medical Education (CME) system are: *“Incidence of stroke and acute renal failure in patients of postoperative atrial fibrillation*

after myocardial revascularization” (pág. 442); *“Results of medium-term survival in patients undergoing cardiac transplantation: institutional experience”* (pág. 470); *“Depression after CABG: a prospective study”* (pág. 491); e *“Mortality risk is dose-dependent on the number of packed red blood cell transfused after coronary artery bypass graft”* (page. 509).

I thank all who have contributed to BJCVS maintain its standard of excellence in 2013. Members and Board of BSCVS, Editorial Board of BJCVS, Advertisers and colleagues from various specialties who provided us with their great articles.

Thank you all for the invaluable collaboration and trust vested in me.

My warmest regards and my wishes that Christmas renew all our hopes and 2014 be prodigal in achievements.



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REFERENCE

1. Braile DM, Godoy MF. História da cirurgia cardíaca no mundo. Rev Bras Cir Cardiovasc. 2012;27(1):125-36.